

CRS Strategic Plan

A Vision for the Future and a Path Forward

2016-2020







Mary B. Mazanc
Director

Director's Preface

More than a century ago, the U.S. Congress recognized the need for an impartial research bureau to help inform the legislative process and created the Legislative Reference Service (LRS). In the 1970s, Congress expanded LRS's role, renamed it the Congressional Research Service (CRS), and assigned CRS the critically important mission of providing to Congress, at every stage of the legislative process, comprehensive and reliable legislative research, analysis and information services that are confidential, objective, nonpartisan, authoritative, and timely. During its first century of service, CRS proved invaluable to Congress, earning its respect and trust. The Service has actively participated in virtually every major legislative debate that has occurred since its creation.

The story of CRS is, in many ways, the story of the thousands of individuals who have worked for the Service over the years. CRS's success is a testament to the diligence and dedication of its professional staff. Whether interacting directly with Members of Congress and their staff or working behind the scenes in support of operations, CRS staff members are responsible for the Service's distinguished reputation.

As CRS begins its second century of service to Congress, it is critical to systematically examine the organization and identify the steps needed to ensure that it will be well positioned to meet the

diverse needs of its congressional clients. Although CRS's mission remains the same, its clients and the environment in which it works are rapidly evolving. As information flows with ever-increasing speed, the Service will work tirelessly for Congress to distill new knowledge and advance creative insights. CRS must adapt to the challenges of change and identify opportunities to optimize its service to Congress.

This strategic plan charts the way ahead for CRS in the years 2016-2020. The plan is a living document, intended to enable the Service to expeditiously and effectively meet the information and research needs of a 21st-century Congress as it tackles the nation's most pressing issues. By combining the intellectual agility of its workforce with the use of dynamic technologies, the CRS of the future will provide research and analysis of unsurpassed quality and utility to Congress.

The content of the strategic plan is based on discussions held in multiple venues with managers, staff and congressional clients. The plan clearly outlines priorities, goals, objectives and action items that will enable the Service to fulfill its mission in the future. Implementation of this plan requires leadership and a commitment to change at all levels of the Service. As we collectively embark on this journey, we must work together to ensure the continued relevance and success of CRS in meeting the needs of Congress.



Give instruction unto
those who cannot procure
it for themselves.



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MISSION

To provide to Congress, throughout the legislative process, comprehensive and reliable legislative research, analysis and information services that are confidential, objective, nonpartisan, authoritative and timely, thereby contributing to an informed national legislature.

VISION

CRS is a trusted, respected, prime source for Congress for expert and authoritative information and analysis on critical issues facing the nation.

CORE VALUES

Confidentiality ★ Objectivity ★ Nonpartisan ★ Authoritativeness ★ Timeliness

KNOWLEDGE WILL FOREVER
GOVERN IGNORANCE:
AND A PEOPLE WHO MEAN
TO BE THEIR OWN GOVERNOURS,
MUST ARM THEMSELVES
WITH THE POWER
WHICH KNOWLEDGE GIVES.

James Madison



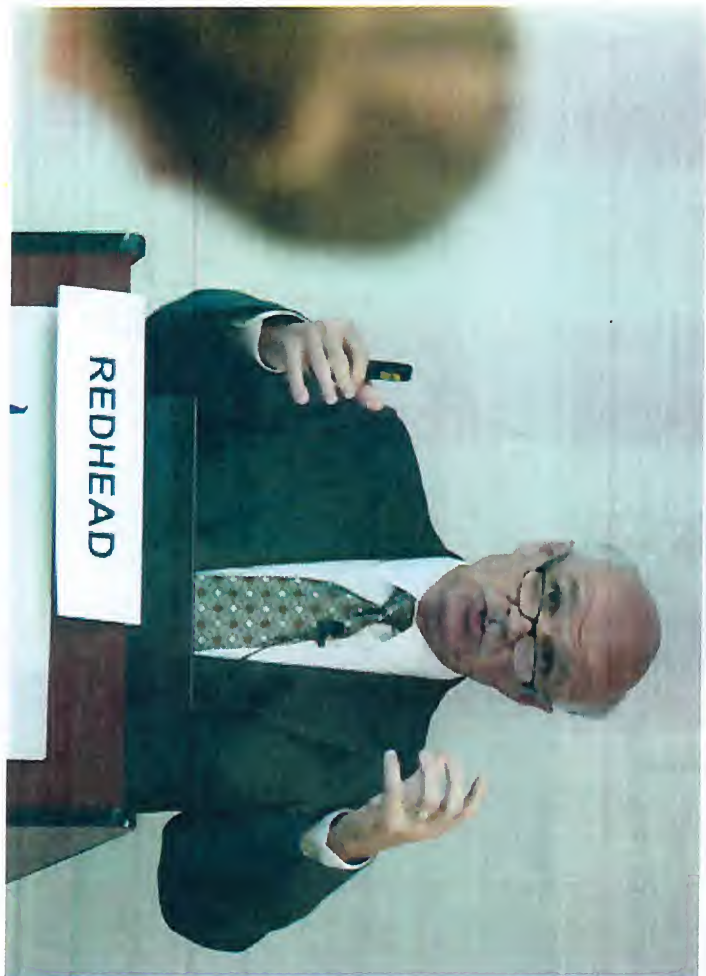
Introduction

The Legislative Reference Service, the predecessor of today's Congressional Research Service (CRS), was created and placed in the Library of Congress in 1914 in the belief that effective representative democracy in a complicated world must be based on objective, nonpartisan knowledge. In 1970, Congress expanded CRS's role, making clear that the Service is to support Members in all aspects of their work: legislative, oversight and representational. Succinctly stated, CRS's mission is to provide comprehensive research and analysis to Congress on all relevant policy issues throughout the legislative process.

The work of the Service is defined by CRS's core values: confidentiality, objectivity, nonpartisanship, authoritativeness and timeliness. By conducting its research and analysis without advocacy or agenda, CRS provides a unique service to all Members

of Congress and congressional committees in their constitutional roles of enacting legislation, overseeing the implementation of those laws and serving their constituents. Over the course of its history, CRS has been highly effective in providing the highest level of independent scholarship on policy and procedural issues while ensuring that its work is free from advocacy or bias. As a result, Congress has come to trust and respect the work of the Service.

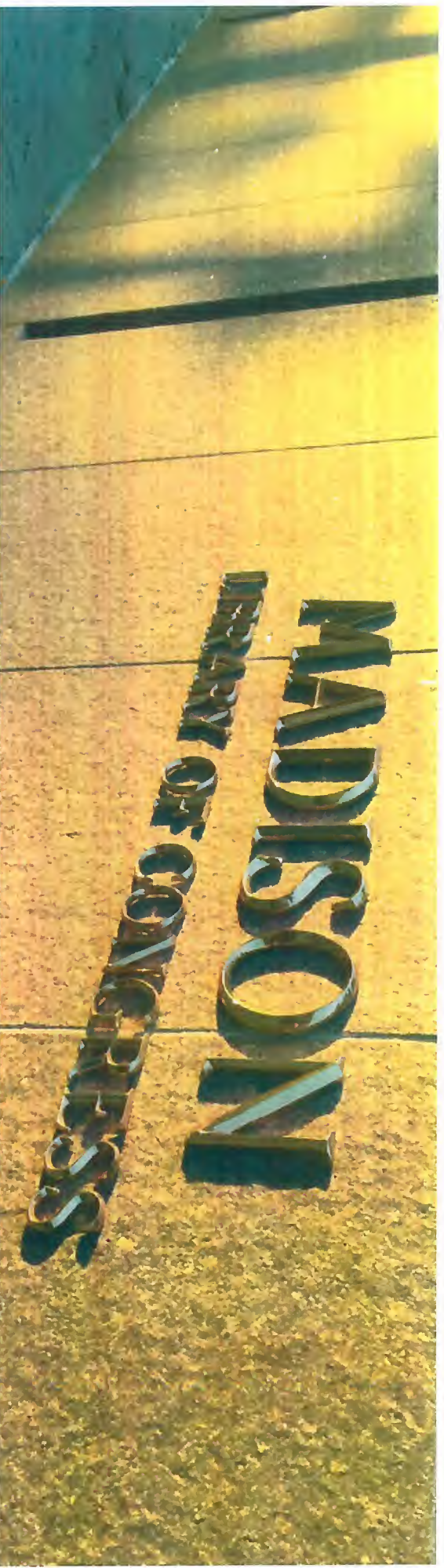
In its second century of service to Congress, CRS's work is more important than ever. The period ahead is not without significant challenges, however, and the Service must readily evolve and adapt to changing circumstances to support a 21st-century Congress. Therefore, the purpose of this document is to examine the challenges ahead and lay out a strategic road map for moving forward.



Methodology

This document is the culmination of more than a year of discussions with CRS managers and staff, as well as Members of Congress and congressional staff. These conversations covered many key areas for CRS with respect to both research/analysis and operations, including research planning and priorities, the product line, workforce planning, resource allocation, and budget planning and

execution. The conversations were held in various venues: all-staff meetings, “brown bag” informal lunch discussions, weekly senior management Research Policy Council meetings, monthly middle management meetings, advisory committee meetings and work groups, the Director’s open office hours, and individual meetings with Members and congressional staff.



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

CRS was created by Congress, and it exists to serve Congress. The Service must meet its critical statutory responsibility (2 U.S.C. §166) to advise and assist committees and Members in the analysis and evaluation of legislative proposals. With the dawn of its second century, CRS is entering a period of significant challenge and change. Its client, Congress, is also responding to numerous drivers of change. To remain relevant, the Service must continue to add value to congressional debate and deliberation. CRS must ensure that Members continue to see it as a trusted, reliable and primary source of information and analysis, as well as a means to obtain invaluable consultative expertise, that enables Congress to meet its constitutional responsibilities effectively and expeditiously.

To best position the Service for the future, targeted priorities have been identified and are listed on the following page. The context for establishing these priorities is provided in the “Strategic Goals” section of this document. Specific objectives to achieve these priorities are identified alongside the goals. Achievement of these priorities as a whole will enable the Service to move forward and fulfill its mission for years to come. The priorities are interrelated, as the accomplishment of one is often dependent on addressing others. As such, the priorities listed are not sequential; instead, they are best viewed as constituent elements, each of which is critical to ensuring the ongoing success of CRS’s mission.

The Service’s preeminent priority is to provide Congress with the insightful, innovative, multidisciplinary research support it needs to conduct the nation’s business. To do that, CRS must nurture its distinctive partnership with Congress so as to remain a trusted, reliable source for timely and objective information and analysis. It must provide state-of-the-art analysis and research to support client needs while adhering to its core values. To ensure robust service, CRS’s workforce must collectively possess the skills and expertise to efficiently and effectively respond to a diverse Congress. Therefore, another top priority for the Service is to recruit and retain the most highly skilled, motivated and dedicated staff possible. The importance of sustaining a dedicated professional workforce cannot be overstated.

Current resource constraints require prudent management. CRS must judiciously execute its budget by identifying and implementing creative approaches to maximize client service while increasing operational efficiencies. Strategic adoption of new technology, analytical tools, and methods may offer both improved efficiencies and novel approaches for presenting information and research in a time-saving format for clients. It therefore represents another high priority for the Service.

PRIORITIES

Provide insightful, innovative, multidisciplinary research and analysis to Congress.

- ▶ Deepen the Service's relationship with Congress to better inform the legislative process and fulfill the CRS mission.
- ▶ Ensure that the immediate needs of Congress are met while continuing to produce forward-looking, anticipatory analyses.
- ▶ Continue to provide a variety of high-quality products and services tailored to meet the diverse needs of Congress.
- ▶ Leverage technology to create and present information, research and analysis in various innovative formats to meet client needs.

Recruit and retain a professional workforce with the necessary skills and expertise to provide comprehensive research and analysis to Congress.

- ▶ Foster a work culture based on integrity, collaboration, cooperation, mutual respect and trust.
- ▶ Provide professional development opportunities to ensure currency of skills and expertise among CRS staff.
- ▶ Recognize and reward staff achievement of extraordinary service to CRS and Congress.

Identify and implement strategies to increase efficiencies and maximize service to Congress.

- ▶ Identify organizational structures and workflow alignments that maximize staff skills and expertise and achieve efficiencies in resource allocation.
- ▶ Explore creative collaborations with other components of the Library and leverage the Library's unparalleled collections and resources.







Strategic Goals

To operationalize CRS's priorities, this document identifies three strategic goals:

- Serve a diverse clientele with a wide spectrum of informational, research and analytical needs while maintaining adherence to core values of confidentiality, objectivity, nonpartisanship, authoritativeness and timeliness.
- Sustain a professional workforce with the skills and expertise necessary to serve a contemporary Congress.
- Creatively and proactively manage resources to effectively and efficiently ensure that CRS successfully fulfills its statutory mission.

The goals are focused on key components of the Service: the research enterprise, the workforce and resource utilization. All three elements are interconnected and critical to realizing CRS's mission. Implementing these goals will enable CRS to identify challenges facing the Service, resolve them, and embrace new opportunities that arise throughout the process.

The Service's continued ability to meet Congress's needs requires increased flexibility in all aspects of CRS operations. The Service must position itself to adjust rapidly to changing demands and new opportunities, to respond more effectively and efficiently, and to quickly adapt to the fast-moving information environment in which Congress operates. Taken collectively, the goals and objectives are designed to enhance flexibilities that enable the Service to continue providing the information and analysis that congressional clients require.

Goal 1

Serve a diverse clientele with a wide spectrum of informational, research and analytical needs while maintaining adherence to core values of confidentiality, objectivity, nonpartisanship, authoritativeness and timeliness.

CRS's continued relevance and success depend on maintaining and building upon its trusted, close working relationship with Members and congressional staff. The Service must ensure that it remains an indispensable, objective resource for Congress. It must continually strive to inform clients about the full spectrum of its services and about the ways CRS can assist them throughout the legislative process. The Service must anticipate congressional needs by identifying, framing and evaluating emerging legislative issues.

Moreover, CRS must serve *all* congressional clients, from new staffers to seasoned legislators, and present its work in formats that clients find most helpful. The Service has taken steps to expand and diversify its product line and to present information in a manner that is useful for all clients, including those new to Capitol Hill.

CRS must also synthesize information from a variety of sources. The Service's work should reflect collaboration, cooperation and integration of all relevant disciplines in its analysis of critical issues facing the nation. In fact, one of CRS's comparative advantages is its ability to provide cross-cutting research and analysis that evaluate the broad implications of legislative issues. Time-pressed congressional clients are likely to find integrated products more useful than those that do not address all key aspects of an issue.

In today's fast-paced, technology-driven environment, CRS services must be timely and accessible to remain relevant. If the Service is not available when Congress requires its assistance, congressional staff will seek information and research on pressing issues elsewhere. Website and mobile application trends have accustomed clients to a personalized experience and the ability to reach people *quickly* and directly. To address these challenges, CRS must continue to explore new delivery mechanisms and

shorter formats that clients increasingly use to access tailored information and interact with experts. At the same time, CRS must retain the capacity to provide complex, analytical research. Intellectual capital and institutional knowledge are the backbone of all CRS services and products.

Another important comparative advantage of the Service is the provision of direct consultative services to congressional clients. Consultative work requires investment in both preparation and execution, perhaps at the cost of time available for writing new products. Client needs for consultation, written products, or other services should influence the allocation of time and resources. How a product or service supports the client (such as analysis of policy or legal options, authoritative information and explanation of legislative action) should drive its development.

Technology is another critical component of the CRS research enterprise. Moving forward, the Service must identify and efficiently leverage new and existing technology to enhance its operations, research capabilities, and the communication of its products and services to Congress. The exponential growth of technology has presented both opportunities and challenges for CRS. For example, in an era of increasingly large and complex databases, use of technology will enable the Service to gather, analyze, store and present information in innovative and illustrative ways. Effective use of new technologies may boost productivity and efficiency. A solid IT foundation will enable CRS to grow and adapt to future innovation smoothly.

However, technology is constantly advancing, and new technology is often expensive. Although congressional adoption of new technology mandates that CRS act in concert to remain relevant, the Service must invest wisely in innovations, carefully balancing the costs associated with such changes and the benefits provided to its clients. CRS must continue to leverage the Library's Office of the Chief Information Officer to the maximum extent possible. It also must collaborate with the Library to efficiently and effectively identify and introduce new technology into its research enterprise.

Access to authoritative information and data is another crucial component of a successful research endeavor. Research materials constitute a significant non-personnel item in the CRS budget. It is fiscally prudent for CRS to collaborate with the Library to identify and acquire authoritative sources. In addition, to the extent practicable, CRS should leverage the Library's expertise and collections to inform the Service's work for Congress.



GOAL 1

Objective 1

Build upon and enhance working relationships with Members, committees and staff.

Action Item 1.1.1 – Update and implement a comprehensive, coordinated outreach and education plan for Members, committees and staff to inform them about CRS services and products and to gather insight into their needs.

Action Item 1.1.2 – Facilitate increased client outreach and engagement at both the Service-wide and individual staff level.

Action Item 1.1.3 – Create and implement a Service-wide training and evaluation program for engaging with Congress, including continual development of presentation and writing skills.

Action Item 1.1.4 – Measure engagement, assess the impact of recent accomplishments, and gather feedback from clients with surveys and other tools.

Objective 2

Enhance informational and analytical products and services to meet the needs of a diverse clientele.

Action Item 1.2.1 – Ensure a robust research planning process, prior to each new session of Congress, that balances the requirements to meet Congress's immediate needs and to conduct forward-looking, anticipatory analysis.

Action Item 1.2.2 – Create a strategy and process to ensure that the content of CRS products reflects an interdisciplinary approach to legislative issues of increasing complexity.

Action Item 1.2.3 – Design and develop new products that deliver information and analysis in innovative formats, such as infographics and interactive maps.

Action Item 1.2.4 – Refine and improve the browsing experience on CRS.gov by replacing static topical pages with more dynamic issue pages that feature the full panoply of CRS products, including consultative services, programs and authoritative information resources.

Action Item 1.2.5 – Create a new taxonomy for all CRS web products to improve search results and enhance the flexibility to personalize the website around users' interests.

Action Item 1.2.6 – Explore video conferencing, web-based instant messaging, webinars and other innovative ways to enhance client interaction in an on-demand, real-time basis.

Action Item 1.2.7 – Deploy online courses (for example, intern orientation) and expand digital educational offerings to optimize client access.

Action Item 1.2.8 – Implement a plan to capture and manage CRS records and information as congressional assets to preserve irreplaceable knowledge and institutional memory.

Objective 3

Optimize research capabilities and client communication through the strategic use of technology.

Action Item 1.3.1 – Review legacy technology and explore new technology to ensure that CRS has the necessary IT foundation for future growth in coordination with the Library's IT strategic planning.

Action Item 1.3.2 – Improve communication with Congress through technology, including exploring enhanced ways to deliver written products and leveraging video-conferencing technology to enable more virtual client consultations from both CRS "Smart Rooms" and individual workstations

Objective 3 continued

Optimize research capabilities and client communication through the strategic use of technology.

Action Item 1.3.3 – Complete preparations for the selection and initial implementation of the next-generation authoring and publishing platform.

Action Item 1.3.4 – Explore and identify the requirements of a new document management and retrieval system that would encompass document storage, retrieval, publication and training.

Action Item 1.3.5 – Work with the Library’s Chief Information Officer to examine and, as appropriate, address observations and recommendations made by the Government Accountability Office in the recent congressionally mandated study of the Library’s IT systems and services.

Action Item 1.3.6 – Ensure that CRS’s IT infrastructure—including workstations and Service-wide systems—is kept up to date, with a preference for easily upgradable and adaptable hardware and software at a reasonable cost.

Action Item 1.3.7 – Explore and implement ways to increase security around CRS systems.

Action Item 1.3.8 – Test and implement research and information tools to facilitate timely research and analysis, such as new statistical and graphical software applications, as well as tools that can deliver aggregated, filtered and customized alerts on issues of interest.

Action Item 1.3.9 – Explore and identify digital technologies to enable project scheduling, tracking and management.

Objective 4

Develop and strengthen collaborative relationships with the Library to leverage collections and resources in support of Congress and to maximize cost-effectiveness and efficiency.

Action Item 1.4.1 – Collaborate with other Library components to explore development of the next-generation authoring and publishing system.

Action Item 1.4.2 – In accordance with client needs, collaborate with the Library to fully develop and optimize the functionality and use of Congress.gov.

Action Item 1.4.3 – With other Library service units, investigate and implement ways to ensure permanent access to information cited in CRS and Library products.

Action Item 1.4.4 – Deploy CRS information professionals to work with Library staff in updating the collections’ policy statements to identify and acquire authoritative sources and material to support legislative analysis.

Action Item 1.4.5 – Continue to work with Library staff in negotiating with vendors for critical information resources at the best price and to leverage the potential access to new materials under the Library’s legal e-deposit program.

Action Item 1.4.6 – Develop a strategy to leverage the Library’s expertise and collections for facilitating research and delivering information to Congress.

Action Item 1.4.7 – With other Library service units, continue to develop and implement the Library’s Geospatial Hosting Environment to respond to congressional requests for Geospatial Information System products and services.

Action Item 1.4.8 – Continue to engage in the Library-wide effort to digitize resources and collections critical for supporting the work of Congress.

Goal 2

Sustain a professional workforce with the skills and expertise necessary to serve the contemporary Congress.

The strength and success of CRS derive from the Service's dedicated and highly skilled workforce. Every staff member is an important part of CRS's mission to serve Congress. Many factors influence current and future workforce requirements, including comprehensive research expectations, adoption of new technologies, a diverse and growing product line, a multi-generational workforce, and budget constraints.

Given these factors, CRS needs to ensure that it is taking the appropriate steps to implement workforce strategies that align skills and expertise to best meet client demands while growing capacity and talent in understaffed and critical areas of expertise. The Service must also strengthen supervisory and leadership competencies. In addition, management must enhance communications with its staff on numerous fronts, including the establishment of priorities, policies, best practices and other matters pertaining to the Service's mission.

A recent examination of the CRS workforce helped to highlight important areas of focus for strategic planning. Specifically, the Service needs to examine how to become more effective in the following areas: staffing options and flexibilities, integration and allocation of staff resources, staff performance evaluation, staff recognition and promotion, knowledge transfer and professional development throughout the career life cycle, and internal and external communications.

Additionally, CRS recognizes the importance and inherent strengths of a diverse and inclusive workforce. The Service will continue to pursue opportunities to ensure staff engagement and support.

Recent actions taken to address current and future workforce requirements include establishing new areas of specialization to maximize resource allocation and grow research services, such as the research assistant and digital librarian positions; integrating social media into the CRS recruitment strategy to remain competitive in attracting top talent among job seekers; launching a supplemental writing program for new research staff; and delivering customized leadership-development courses to strengthen critical competencies for effective supervision. Although these accomplishments are steps in the right direction, more needs to be done to ensure that CRS is positioned to sustain its high-quality workforce.





GOAL 2

Objective 1

Develop a multipronged succession strategy to build bench strength in critical areas of expertise and grow staff capacity and talent.

- Action Item 2.1.1 – Design and implement a workforce plan to address areas of vulnerability relative to succession target occupations.
- Action Item 2.1.2 – Expand professional opportunities to grow expertise, gain new experiences and develop skills.
- Action Item 2.1.3 – Deliver competency-driven leadership courses to enhance and build capabilities for existing and future supervision and management.
- Action Item 2.1.4 – Strengthen and expand the CRS mentoring program to broaden the reach of staff support and development and facilitate robust knowledge transfer.

Objective 2

Establish a performance culture that aligns with CRS work requirements and affords meaningful staff recognition.

- Action Item 2.2.1 – Update position descriptions to more accurately reflect work requirements.
- Action Item 2.2.2 – Identify opportunities to strengthen standards and processes used to evaluate performance and promotion eligibility for all staff.
- Action Item 2.2.3 – Implement regular management training to facilitate consistent and equitable staff performance and promotion.
- Action Item 2.2.4 – Identify and implement meaningful staff recognition options.

Objective 3

Develop and implement workforce planning measures to sustain a high-quality workforce and optimize staffing alignment and allocation to meet client demand.

- Action Item 2.3.1 – Expand areas of expertise to strengthen the capacity to meet client demand and improve the provision of products and services.
- Action Item 2.3.2 – Review the Service's staffing structure and study alternatives to ensure optimal research capability, expertise and workload allocation.
- Action Item 2.3.3 – Develop a corporate diversity and inclusion strategy to support a culture of opportunity.
- Action Item 2.3.4 – Implement assessment tools to facilitate decisions in hiring high-quality individuals.

Objective 4

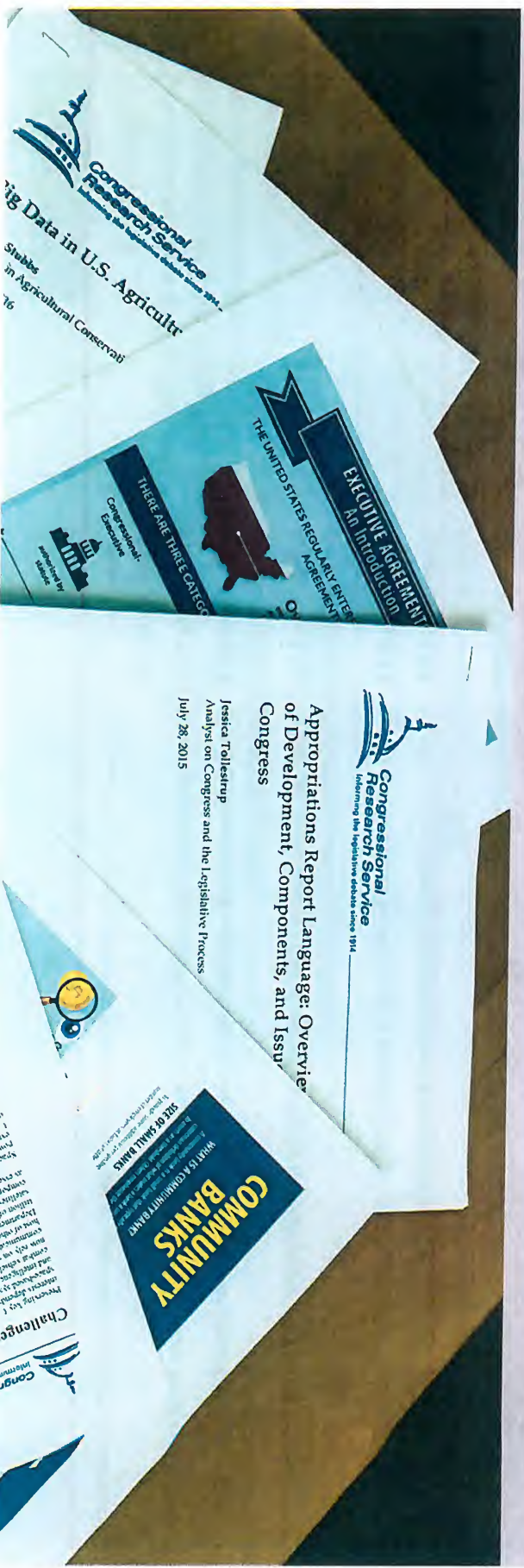
Work to optimize communication regarding CRS priorities, policies, practices and other relevant matters.

- Action Item 2.4.1 – Develop a strategy to expand two-way communication and engagement between CRS management and staff.
- Action Item 2.4.2 – Update and improve the CRS intranet to make it easier to navigate and enable more interactive engagement between CRS management and staff via mechanisms such as blogs and discussion forums.
- Action Item 2.4.3 – Execute regular review and communication of CRS policies to ensure that all CRS staff are properly informed about workplace expectations.
- Action Item 2.4.4 – Work to standardize communication practices within divisions across the Service to provide uniform communication to all CRS staff.

Goal 3

Creatively and proactively manage resources to effectively and efficiently ensure that CRS successfully fulfills its statutory mission.

Similar to all federal agencies, current resource limitations present a substantial challenge to the Service, at least in the short term. CRS is being asked to do more with less and, therefore, must be a prudent steward of its resources. The Service must deploy its resources strategically to continue to serve the client and fulfill its statutory mission. The course forward will require creative solutions to recognized challenges, including rising client expectations; the emergence of new, costly technology; and the increasing expense of research materials and information sources. The Service must examine the conduct of its operations and take steps to reduce any redundancies and inefficiencies. It must judiciously allocate its resources to ensure that the most critical priorities are addressed.



GOAL 3

Objective 1

Identify and implement strategies to further streamline operations and maximize use of resources to increase efficiencies and reduce costs.

Action Item 3.1.1 – Formulate and test a new strategy to achieve greater efficiency and coordination in providing information, research and services to clients and CRS staff.

Action Item 3.1.2 – Conduct an organizational assessment of workflow to identify redundancies across units and thereby optimize operational efficiencies.

Action Item 3.1.3 – Review and evaluate outsourced activities to identify cost-reducing opportunities and avenues for service enhancements within resource allocations.

Objective 2

Establish operational standards for managing research priorities across the research divisions to ensure CRS-wide consistency.

Action Item 3.2.1 – Continue to implement and refine a robust prioritization strategy to ensure the effective use of analytic resources.

Action Item 3.2.2 – Consult with congressional stakeholders on CRS strategies to prioritize research to best meet client expectations while balancing staff workload.

Action Item 3.2.3 – Communicate prioritization strategy to CRS staff to enable consistent and efficient handling of incoming requests at all levels.

Objective 3

Evaluate and implement opportunities to use new and existing technologies and improve operational efficiencies.


Action Item 3.3.1 – Develop and implement a strategy and process to select and prioritize technology investments that will best enhance CRS work processes and client services.

Objective 4

Develop and institute a long-term plan to manage space utilization effectively to provide an optimal working environment.

Action Item 3.4.1 – Prepare and implement a five-year space-utilization plan that promotes effective workspaces within the framework of a manageable outlay of resources.

Action Item 3.4.2 – Develop and implement guidelines and processes to mitigate the amount of office moves within the divisional and sectional footprint.

A low-angle photograph of an American flag waving on a tall pole against a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. To the left, the corner of a modern building with a grid of windows is visible, creating a strong geometric frame for the scene.

“The success of CRS
is a testament to the
diligence and dedication
of its professional staff.”

— CRS Director Mary Mazanec





Conclusion & Next Steps

This document sets priorities and charts the course that CRS will take over the next five years. It identifies specific goals, objectives and action items that will inform decision-making and budget requests for the next several years. Some of the action items can be accomplished in the short term, whereas others will require more discussion, investigation, planning and resources and may take significant time to be fully implemented. The document is meant to be a “living” document, which will evolve and grow as changes in client needs and expectations necessitate. Next steps will include development of an operational plan to further refine action items and identify tasks necessary to implement the strategic plan. Throughout, CRS will aggressively seek to attract and retain the most creative, forward-thinking expert staff. As CRS works to implement the objectives and action items set out in this document, additional strategic questions may surface that will require thoughtful consideration.

Appendix A

The Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress: Legal Evolution and Statutory Mandate

From LRS to CRS

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) is a department within the Library of Congress that provides research and analysis exclusively to the U.S. Congress. Antecedents of CRS can be traced to a 1914 appropriation that provided “For legislative reference: To enable the Librarian of Congress to employ competent persons to prepare such indexes, digests, and compilations of law as may be required for Congress....” This language was broadened in 1915 and repeated in annual funding bills until passage of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, which provided permanent statutory authority.

The 1946 act “authorized and directed” the Librarian of Congress to establish in the Library “a separate department to be known as the Legislative Reference Service.” Pursuant to this legislation, it was “the duty of the Legislative Reference Service,” in part, to “advise and assist” committees in the “analysis, appraisal, and evaluation of legislative proposals” and to “gather, classify ... [and] analyze ... data related to legislation.”

Congress effected a major transformation of the Legislative Reference Service in the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970, creating the modern-day CRS. The 1970 legislation was based

on the work of the Joint Committee on the Organization of the Congress, which studied the Legislative Reference Service and its relationship to the Library of Congress. The 1970 measure was intended to foster a close relationship between CRS, the Library and Congress.

With regard to Congress, the report of the House Committee on Rules stated that the aim of the expansion of the Service and the resources available to it was to “provide massive aid in policy analysis” to Congress, such that “upon request, CRS will supply committees with experts capable of preparing, or assisting in preparing, objective, nonpartisan, in-depth analyses and appraisals of any subject matter.” (Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970, H.R. Rep. No. 1215, 91st Cong., 2nd sess. (1970), p. 18.)

Turning to the relationship between CRS and the Library, the House Committee on Rules declared: “[W]e considered and rejected a complete divorcement of the Service from the Library. In our judgment, the Library serves as a useful mantle for protecting the Service from partisan pressures. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the CRS will be enhanced by its continued instant access to the Library’s collections and administrative support services.” (Ibid., p. 20.)

Appendix A

The Statutory Mission of CRS

As established in the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 (and codified at 2 U.S.C. §166), CRS is charged with “rendering to Congress the most effective and efficient service”; “responding most expeditiously, effectively, and efficiently to the special needs of Congress”; and “discharging its responsibilities to Congress.”

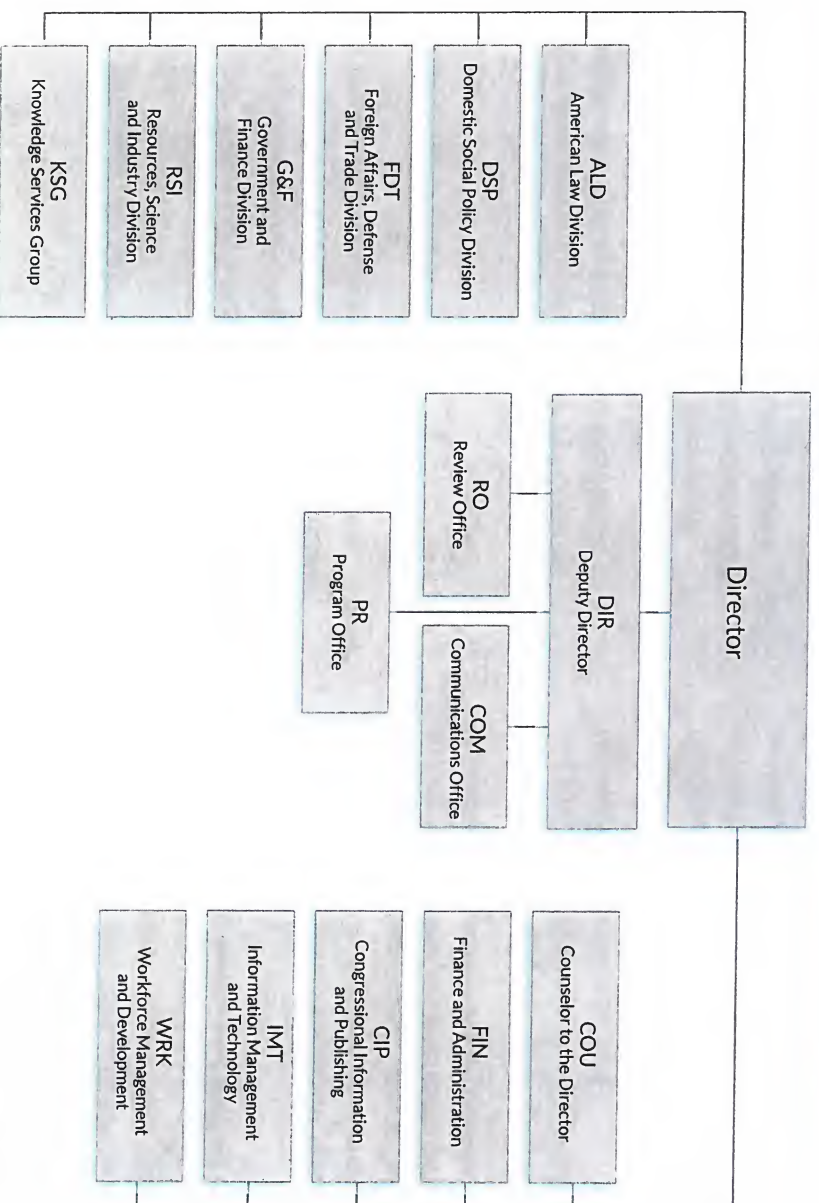
This statute further provides that it is the duty of CRS, “without *partisan bias*,” to

- Advise and assist any committee of the Senate or House of Representatives and any joint committee of Congress in the “analysis, appraisal, and evaluation of legislative proposals” within the committee’s jurisdiction;
 - Advise and assist any such committee in the analysis, appraisal and evaluation of recommendations submitted to Congress by the President or any executive agency;
 - Provide other research and analytical services that any such committee considers appropriate for these purposes.
- More broadly, this statute further directs CRS, upon request or at its own initiative in anticipation of requests, to
- “[C]ollect, classify, and analyze in the form of studies, reports, compilations, digests, bulletins, indexes,
 - translations, and otherwise, data having a bearing on legislation, and to make such data available and serviceable to committees and Members of the Senate and House of Representatives and joint committees of Congress”;
 - “[P]repare and provide information, research, and reference materials and services to committees and Members of the Senate and House of Representatives and joint committees of Congress to assist them in their legislative and representative functions;
 - “[P]repare summaries and digests of bills and resolutions of a public general nature introduced in the Senate or House of Representatives”; and
 - “[U]pon request made by any committee or Member of the Congress, to prepare and transmit to such committee or Member a concise memorandum with respect to one or more legislative measures upon which hearings by any committee of the Congress have been announced, which memorandum shall contain a statement of the purpose and effect of each such measure, a description of other relevant measures of similar purpose or effect previously introduced in the Congress, and a recitation of all action taken theretofore by or within the Congress with respect to each such other measure....”

Appendix B



Organizational Structure



March 2015

Photography

Credits

Jerry Almonte: Pages iii, vi, 2 (Pinckney, Argueta), 7-20

Jeremiah Gertler: Page 3

Carol Highsmith: Pages iv, viii

Shawn Miller: Pages 2 (Redhead), 6 (Brown)

Central Photo Company: Page ii

C-SPAN: Page 6 (Katzman, Arieff, Schwartz and Gravelle)

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Captions

Clockwise from top left where applicable:

Page vi: Calvin C. DeSouza, Kristen Finklea, Kimberly E. Crawford, John Pull

Page 2: Kevin C. Pinckney, Carla N. Argueta, C. Stephen Redhead

Page 6: *Top left to bottom:* Kenneth Katzman, Alexis Arieff,
Moshe Schwartz, Jane G. Gravelle. *Right:* Jared T. Brown

Page 9: Carla E. Humud, Brian T. Yeh

Page 13: Kristy N. Kamarck, Ian E. Rinehart

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Congressional Research Service
Informing the legislative debate since 1914

